

Tic Tac Drop Help Contents

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To learn how to use Help, choose How to Use Help from the Help menu, or press F1.

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Overview

If you were on a slow spaceship heading for a distant planet, this is one of the games you should have aboard. It's as if tic-tac-toe were created centuries ago in anticipation of a computer version that would make the game even more fun to play. In fact, rumor has it that Tic Tac Drop was dropped into the laps of scientists searching the heavens for signs of intelligence. No matter what the story, Tic Tac Drop is a soothing, thoughtful, and less frantic alternative to the usual pace of daily life. And, especially when working with a large number of rows and columns, it provides a tremendously enjoyable analytical exercise.

Tic Tac Drop offers more than 150 game configurations. You can customize your own boards by choosing the number of columns and rows you want, the shape you want them in, and the parameters required to win. You can play against yourself, another person, or the computer at three different skill levels.

Tic Tac Drop is a tutor, too. Build the most complex playing grid you can, and then choose Demo from the Game menu. Watch as the computer plays against itself and learn from the strategies it engages.

Enjoy!

See Also

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Playing the Game

The object of Tic Tac Drop is to get a select number of balls in a straight line, as you would in a game of tic-tac-toe. Drop one game ball at a time into the top of the column you want. Try for a vertical, horizontal, or diagonal row as your opponent plots to block your every play.

You can control the complexity of the game by changing the size and shape of the grid, the number of balls needed to form a win pattern, the skill level, the number of players, and who goes first.

You can also set up Tic Tac Drop to suit your personal preferences. The next time you start a game, Tic Tac Drop uses the settings as you last left them.

To start a new game

- ▶ From the Game menu, choose New, or press F2.

To drop a game ball

- 1 From one of the storage bins, drag a game ball to the top of the playing grid.
- 2 Release the ball into the column of your choice.

Player 1 uses the red balls in the left storage bin; Player 2 (or the computer) uses the blue balls in the right storage bin.

Note: On black-and-white displays, the game balls are light gray and dark gray.

Just for the fun of it, try dropping a ball so that it misses the playing grid.

To choose the number of rows

- ▶ On the toolbar, click the Rows window, and then click the number of rows you want.

To choose the number of columns

- ▶ On the toolbar, click the Columns window, and then click the number of columns you want.

Note: The Columns window is not active when playing with the triangle or diamond grid.

To choose a grid shape

- ▶ On the toolbar, click one of the three Grid buttons: Square, Triangle, or Diamond. The square grid is the easiest.

To choose the win pattern

- ▶ On the toolbar, click the Win Pattern window, and then click the number of balls that must be in a row to win the game.

To choose a skill level

- ▶ On the toolbar, click the Level window, and then click Beginner, Intermediate, or Advanced.

To choose the number of players

- ▶ From the Options menu, choose Players, and then choose either One or Two. Choose One if you want the computer as your opponent. Choose Two if you want another player as your opponent. You can also choose Two to compete against yourself or to practice.

To choose who plays first

- ▶ From the Options menu, choose Who's First?, and then choose Player 1 or Player 2. When you play the computer, choose Player 2 if you want the computer to make the first move.

See Also

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Rules of the Game

The object of the game is to get a select number of game balls in a straight row, vertically, horizontally, or diagonally. At the same time, use the game balls to block your opponent (either Player 2 or the computer).

- You can play on a square, triangle, or diamond grid by choosing one of the Grid buttons on the [toolbar](#).
- You can change the shape of the grid by increasing or decreasing the number of columns and rows.
- Drop the game balls from the area above the playing grid columns. If you drop balls on top of the grid itself or on either side, Tic Tac Drop bounces them off the screen and returns them to the storage bin without penalty to the player.
- If you attempt to change game elements (such as number of columns or rows, grid shape, number of players, who goes first, and so on) during a game, Tic Tac Drop prompts you to start a new game. You can choose the OK button to start a new game with the changes you want, or you can choose the Cancel button to continue the game in progress without making changes.

See Also

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Strategy and Hints

This section contains helpful hints for playing Tic Tac Drop successfully.

- Whenever you set up a new shape or size for the playing grid, choose Demo from the Game menu and watch while the computer plays. Set the skill level for Advanced and study the strategies used.
- Begin with smaller grids that require only three or four balls in a row for a victory. Once you develop skills for the smaller grids, work your way up to the larger ones and try new shapes.
- When playing on a larger grid, start several win patterns in various locations across the grid. This strategy provides you with more opportunities to complete a win pattern and more blocks against your opponent's efforts.
- Don't play sequentially. Camouflage your plots by first creating the two ends of a win pattern; fill in the middle later when your opponent is busy either blocking you or trying to win.
- Think about your opponent when you make your move. If you drop a game ball into a column, raising the height to three balls, make sure that the computer (or another opponent) can't drop a game ball into the same column to create a winning line.
- Save a long game (by choosing the Save command from the Game menu) and return to it later (by choosing the Open command from the Game menu). Taking a break may provide just the perspective you need to ace the game.
- To reduce Tic Tac Drop to an icon, press the esc key or click the Minimize button.

See Also

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How to Play

This section contains information about how to play Tic Tac Drop.

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Commands

This section contains information about the commands in Tic Tac Drop.

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Game Menu Commands

This section contains information about the commands on the Game menu.

New

Starts a new game based on the settings as you last left them.

Demo

Plays a demonstration on the grid you are currently using, showing strategies for the game. Press the SPACEBAR to stop the demo and start a new game.

Open

Opens a previously saved game.

The Open dialog box is displayed so you can choose the game you want to resume.

Save

Saves the current game so you can continue playing at a later time.

The Save As dialog box is displayed so you can type a name for the game you want to save.

Exit

Quits Tic Tac Drop. You can quit at any time, even in the middle of a game.

Options Menu Commands

This section contains information about the commands on the Options menu.

Players

Decides the number of players.

One player plays against the computer. Two players play against each other. Game balls for Player 1 are red. Game balls for Player 2 (another player or the computer) are blue.

Note: On black-and-white displays, the game balls are light gray and dark gray.

Who's First?

Decides which player goes first.

Player 1 always goes first, unless you choose Player 2. If you choose Player 2 and you're playing against the computer, the computer goes first.

Sound

Turns game sounds on and off.

A check mark is displayed beside the command name when the sound is turned on.

Statistics

Displays a running total of wins and losses for all games, including the current game.

You can clear game statistics by clicking the Yes button in the Statistics box.

toolbar

Located at the top of the Tic Tac Drop screen. Offers instant access to the most frequently used Tic Tac Drop commands. By simply clicking a button or a window, you can choose the shape and size of the playing grid, the number of game balls, or the skill level.